

of large-scale production in textiles, the problems of capitalist industry and of a propertyless proletariat were still too novel for their essential features to be appreciated. Even those writers, like Baxter and Bunyan, who continued to insist on the wickedness of extortionate prices and unconscionable interest, rarely thought of applying their principles to the subject of wages. Their social theory had been designed for an age of petty agriculture and industry, in which personal relations had not yet been superseded by the cash nexus, and the craftsman or peasant farmer was but little removed in economic status from the half-dozen journeymen or labourers whom he employed. In a world increasingly dominated by great clothiers, iron-masters and mine-owners, they still adhered to the antiquated categories of master and servant, with the same obstinate indifference to economic realities, as leads the twentieth century to talk of employers and employed, long after the individual employer has been converted into an impersonal corporation.

In a famous passage of the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx observes that "the *bourgeoisie*, wherever it got the upper hand, put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations, pitilessly tore asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his * natural superiors,' and left remaining no other bond between

man and
man than naked self-interest and callous
cash pay-
ment/' ^{lt4} An, interesting illustration of his
thesis
might be found in the discussions of the
economics of
employment by English writers of the period
between
1660 and 1760. Their characteristic was an
attitude
towards- the new industrial proletariat
noticeably
harsher than that general in the first half of
the seven-
teenth century, and which has no modern
parallel
except in the behaviour of the less reputable
of white
colonists towards coloured labour. The
denunciations
of the " luxury, pride and sloth " ^{M5} of the
English
wage-earners of the seventeenth and
eighteenth centuries